

Marshfield Conservation Commission
131st Meeting
Meeting of 5 June 2019

Members Present: Taber Allison, Allen Banbury, Steve Fiske, Ed Jalbert, Anne Miller, Sara Norton, Bob Popp, Annie Reed, Rachel Rudi,

Others: Mike Farrell & Scott Williams, director and site manager of Rte 2 sugar operation.

Minutes: Approved with minor corrections

Treasurers Report

- Plant sale brought in \$1,267 net
- Conservation Fund balance \$10,093

Letter to Planning commission

- Annie questioned whether we want to address the projected increased demand for housing due to climate change. Decided that would be a separate topic
- A few minor edits were made and the letter was unanimously supported by the commission.

Motion: to send the letter to the Planning Commission. Approved unanimously.

- **Bob** will redraft and send to Annie to sign & distribute

Book Reprint:

- Sara reported that Minuteman has new printers which delayed the printing. Will be available in about a week

Trees at Martin Covered Bridge

- Allen checked the status of planted trees; screening is keeping beaver away from the trees.
- There is still plenty of space for growth without cutting into the bark.

Sugarbush Discussion. Commission invited Mike Farrell to discuss hip operation. He is the former research director of maple products at Cornell

- The main collection station is between Bailey & Marshfield Ponds. The tubing runs down to sugarhouse on Rte 2. Ca ½ mile flow.
- Have 10,000 taps on drew Mt. Assoc. property, also have lease on Ducharme property, and bought Evergreen property. Only 35% of land is presently tapped; they will add more taps this summer.

- Was recently logged to remove mostly ash. Has EAB on their property in Marshfield and removed ash before they begin to establish tap lines.
- Tubing for white & yellow birch run together parallel to lines for maple. They tap both red & sugar maple. Birch sap starts flowing later, usually beginning to middle of April.
- Birch is heavily tapped in Europe & Japan. Following same standards as for maple since no research done on tapping birch in US.
- Will tap Devils Hill but too steep to cut. Also plan to tap on Hardwood Mt. a few years from now.
- They are still in negotiation for the Forest Legacy easement. The Forest Service is still working on appraisal and the easement language. They received an extension till Dec and are still hopeful it will be approved. They purchased the property with intent of getting the easement but they claim that the state is putting add'l restrictions on easements due to opposition to recent industrial sugar operation in NEK. Present language requires renewal every 10 yrs so could hypothetically require removal of all tubing ten years hence.
- Tubing has ca 15 yr life and will remove and recycle when it is replaced.
- Easement is for fee ownership portion of the operation, ca. 2280 Ac.
- They are spraying for forest tent caterpillar with BT but affects all Lepidoptera not just gypsy moth.
- Intend to also tap beech which claim would otherwise have to be cut. The state has no data on effect of tapping beech other than it will likely decrease beech nut production.
- Scott cell is 802 477-3807. He asked that we call him if any problems or questions.
- They offered to set up a future field visit to view the operation.

FoW tree maintenance

- No participation from MCC members

Retreat Proposal

- Last one was in Dec 2015 where we prioritized projects.
- Sara proposes another to review our progress and reprioritize projects.
- Suggestion to table until fall: Oct or Nov meeting. Will discuss further at the meeting prior to the retreat to establish a topic outline/agenda
- **Annie** will distribute the agenda from the last retreat to members.

Model Communities:

- Reviewed results of first meeting and voted with dots to prioritize tasks.
- Developed 4 subcommittees: transportation, energy, town centers, and food.

- Next meeting is **Thurs, 20 June** to articulate the agendas of the various subcommittees and encourage folks to participate in one or more of them.

Natural Marshfield

- Possible program on snakeworms
- Michael Saborin will speak on ticks in August.

Climate Refugees.

- Anne wants us to begin discussing the problem of potential influx of people due to severe storms, flooding elsewhere and how we should prepare for it.
- Perhaps consider the issue jointly with PC or engage Model Communities.
- **Taber** will research various scenarios for next meeting

Reports on Field Trip

- Nearly 50 folks participated in the flower walk, some from afar. Largely due to the Fish & Wildlife Dept advertising it on their website and press releases.
- Ca. 15 folks for Bird walk

Announcements:

- Phragmites on Beaver Meadow has been flattened but nobody knew how this occurred
- **Annie** will discuss with Tony & Pat Mayhew
- Marshfield invasives is a separate project on iNaturalist
- **Taber** will send out instructions again.

June 22 Climate Change presentation with state climatologist. Plainfield Opera House 10 – 12.

Submitted by: Bob Popp

Submitted on: 13 June 2019

Approved on: 10 July 2019